

MINUTES  
**HOUSE HEALTH & WELFARE COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Wednesday, March 17, 2021

**TIME:** 9:00 A.M.

**PLACE:** Room EW20

**MEMBERS:** Chairman Wood, Vice Chairman Vander Woude, Representatives Gibbs, Blanksma, Kingsley, Christensen, Lickley, Erickson, Ferch, Mitchell, Chew, Rubel, Davis

**ABSENT/  
EXCUSED:** Representative(s) Christensen

**GUESTS:** Ivy Smith, IFYAB

**Chairman Wood** called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Lickley** made a motion to approve the minutes for the March 16, 2021, meeting. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

**H 336:** **Rep. Jason Monks**, District 22, presented **H 336**. This legislation has two parts. Part one provides a qualified residential treatment program for youth who may have committed crimes or have mental and behavioral health problems which require extensive therapy and treatment options. Regular placements may not work because the youth may pose a danger to themselves or others. This program is about the best option for the youth. An assessment determines the best treatment and where the treatment occurs, including long- and short-term goals. A placement report to the courts includes a 60-day review of their plan.

Part two of this legislation addresses youth who age out of the foster care system. When these young adults turn 18 there are no supports for them. He shared statistics which indicate 20% of them become homeless, 7 out of 10 girls become pregnant, and 60% of the boys end up being convicted of a crime. This stage of life offers more challenges when there are no goals or supports. This legislation provides an avenue for children aged 18, 19, and 20, if they choose, to remain in the foster program and receive additional help.

The fiscal note will be changed further to reflect the costs. The program cost reflects initial costs as the youth enter the program. One third of the aged-out youth are expected to enter the program the first two years. The third year will reflect youth leaving and entering the program. The numbers are conservative and do not include the higher COVID Federal Medical Assistance Percentages (FMAP) extension.

There is a cost to society when these young adults become homeless, are convicted of crimes, have drug abuse issues, and are unable to attend college. Approximately 70% of them want to go to college. This is an investment that will far exceed the cost. It is about Idaho's youth, not the numbers.

**MOTION:** **Rep. Gibbs** made a motion to send **H 336** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

Committee members expressed enthusiastic agreement with the legislation, citing the rewards of helping and protecting Idaho's youth. There was also concern expressed regarding telling our youth statistics, which is not supportive. This is a patient and consumer protection bill for our youth.

**Ivy Smith**, representing the Idaho Foster Youth Advisory Board, testified in **support of H 336**. She shared her experience with aging out of the foster care system and her fight with the courts to get help to attend college. This legislation will help Idaho's youth have goals they can attain after graduation. The youth are told the statistics they face, which keeps them from trying. Showing them Idaho cares about their success and want them to be a part of the community will make a big difference. This gives Idaho's most vulnerable youth a chance to thrive.

**VOTE ON MOTION:**

**Chairman Wood** called for a vote on the motion to send **H 336** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. Monks** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

**Rep. Lickley** requested a privilege, which was granted. She invited all who testified as well as the listening public to help the Idaho Behavioral Health Council (IBHC). The IBHC is charged with presenting a strategic recommendation to the Governor by the end of June. To that end they are hosting a public hearing on March 30th, 2021, from 5:00pm - 7:00pm MST via Zoom. Registration is available on their website and open until March 23, 2021. Public input is important as they develop the best plan for Idaho to address mental health, behavioral health, and substance abuse issues.

**ADJOURN:**

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 9:24 a.m.

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Representative Wood  
Chair

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Irene Moore  
Secretary